

Christian Secretary.

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"WHAT THOU SEEST, WRITE—AND SEND UNTO THE CHURCHES."

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Infant Baptism Explained and Defended.

REVIEW NO. 3.

It is worth while, perhaps, to adduce yet more examples in which infant baptism was both delayed and opposed during "the next 700 years" after the fourth century. We find such an example in the case of Stephen I., King of Hungary. For although he was born of Christian parents, in the tenth century, he was not baptized till adult age. That Geysa, his father, and Sarolta, his mother, did delay, or rather neglect infant baptism, all must admit; and how Mr. Griggs knows that they did so without wishing it, he will probably inform us in the next edition of his work.

Again, in the works of Ambrose, Epist. 84, p. 185, there is a letter, addressed to one Demetrius, and written subsequently to the fourth century. In that letter I find the following language in reference to the doctrine of Pelagius: "Innumerable souls, and the churches in general, have withstood the infection of the new doctrine; but some souls have imbibed the poison. Hence the insidious commendation of human nature, and the defence of its original rectitude, as ever preserved unblemished. Hence Adam's sin has been asserted to be noxious only by example; hence in fact the abolition of infant baptism."

Here we find a writer, in the midst of the Pelagian controversy, accounting for the abolition of infant baptism. Yet Mr. Griggs assures us that there was not at that time a solitary instance of such abolition. "Every generation grows wiser and wiser."

Again, Dr. Milnor, speaking of the disciples of Gundulphus, says that, "They particularly objected to the baptism of infants, because they were altogether incapable of understanding or confessing the truth." Then, to account for this *heresy* he says that "The nature of mankind ever prone to run from one extreme to another, will easily account for this circumstance of the rejection of infant baptism. The practice had long been sullied with superstitious fables; the transition to its total rejection was natural." Eccl. Hist. vol. 1, p. 698.

Now Gundulphus flourished in the early part of the eleventh century. Yet Mr. Griggs tells us that there was not, during that century, a single instance where any one even so much as wished to delay the baptism of infants. "Who shall decide when doctors disagree?"

On this point I will adduce no more evidence. The man who can stand up before all these witnesses, and with the authority of a Christian minister, assert that, from the end of the fourth to the beginning of the twelfth century, "there were none found who wished to delay, much less oppose the baptism of infants," must be affected with extreme diffidence.

Again, we are told by Mr. Griggs that "there are but few at the present time, compared with all who profess the Christian religion, that reject infant baptism." p. 28. This of course is a question of fact, and cannot be determined without positive knowledge.

In the protestant almanac for 1846, which is the latest and best authority on this subject, the present number of the several religious denominations in the United States, is estimated as follows: Presbyterians, 431,000; Congregationalists, 308,100; Episcopalians, 90,000; Methodists, 1,350,000; Lutherans, 150,000; Dutch Reformed, 32,000; German Reformed, 76,000; Evangelical Germans, 24,000; Moravians, 7,200; Baptists, 1,012,015.

According to this account, the Baptists alone number almost half as many as all denominations of pedobaptists together. And moreover, it is a notorious fact that very many who are members of pedobaptist churches reject infant baptism. Yet these together with all the Baptists are, according to Mr. Griggs, comparatively few. O' Euclid!

It will be recollected that Mr. Griggs in the outset professed to base the doctrine of infant baptism on the word of God. Yet, as if the Bible was not sufficient, he appeals to the early Christian fathers. "Origen [A. D. 185] says 'the church received a tradition or order from the apostles to give baptism to little children also.'" p. 27.

Every reader would understand from this, that Origen wrote that which is here attributed to him; and that he wrote it A. D. 185. Whether the author intended to convey such meaning is best known to himself. It happens, however, that Origen was born A. D. 185, and his most critical works did not appear until sometime afterwards. Besides, the above expression, considered as a quotation, is neither pure nor perfect. The words "or order," are not found in the original; they were originally added by the translator in brackets, to be substituted at the option of the reader for "tradition." But in Mr. Griggs' work these brackets are slipped off, and both "tradition" and "order," are given as the language of Origen.

The whole passage unadorned thus: "For this also it was that the church had from the apostles a tradition to give baptism to little ones also; since they to whom divine mysteries were committed knew that there is in all persons the natural pollution of sin, which must be done away by water and the

Spirit; by reason of which the body itself also is called the body of sin." Comm. Epist. ad Rom. Lib. 5.

Let it be observed here, that the earliest writer whom Mr. Griggs has cited in favor of infant baptism, based his plea on the authority of tradition, and made the rite itself essential to infant salvation. His argument for infant communion also was built upon the same foundation, investing that ordinance with the same essentiality.

Again, the author tells us that, "Augustine [A. D. 354] says, 'the whole church practice infant baptism; it was not instituted by Councils, but was always in use.'" p. 27.

Here it is asserted that Augustine used the language attributed to him by the marks of quotation, and also that he uttered that language A. D. 354. The truth is, however, that Augustine was not born until A. D. 354; and I positively deny that such language occurs within the whole compass of his writings.

He does say, in his work against the Donatists, "If any one asks for divine authority in this matter, though that which the whole church practices, and which has not been instituted by Councils, but was ever in use, is very reasonably believed to be no other than a thing delivered by authority of the apostles, yet we may, besides, take a true estimate how much the sacrament of baptism does avail infants, by the circumcision which God's former people received." Lib. 4. c. 15.

It is probable that Mr. Griggs' quotation originated from this passage, and it may be thought to convey substantially the same sense; yet in making quotations, such distortions and transformations of an author's language cannot be tolerated, either by the principles of sound criticism, or the spirit of "Christian courtesy."

Let it be particularly noted here that the next early writer whom Mr. Griggs cites in the advocacy of infant baptism, pleads only the authority of probable apostolic tradition, and the analogy of circumcision, without pretending here to claim any warrant for the rite from the written precepts of Christ, or the practice of the apostles.

Again, Mr. Griggs says that, "the never heard of any one, even the most impious heretic, who asserted that infants are not to be baptized." p. 27.

Now this pretended quotation, like those that precede, is given without any citation; but the reader may rest assured that no such language ever fell from the lips, or flowed from the pen of Pelagius. For certainly no such passage is found in his extant writings, and it has been proved beyond the possibility of a reasonable doubt, that infant baptism was rejected in the time of Pelagius; which he must have known, and which he cannot be supposed to have denied.

The great question at issue between Pelagius and Augustine, was that of original sin. But out of this arose several subordinate questions. Hence a real difference of opinion as to the object of baptizing infants, and a misunderstanding, or misconstruction, of Pelagius' views in relation to their salvation; Augustine maintaining that infants ought to be baptized for the remission of original sin; while Pelagius denying the doctrine of original sin, taught that infants might be saved without baptism. Since baptism, therefore, was in the opinion of Augustine, that regeneration without which none can enter heaven, any one who should promise the salvation of an unbaptized infant, would of course be regarded by him, and his adherents, as holding the doctrine that men may enter heaven without the grace of regeneration. Such indeed was the charge, unjustly made, and unfairly pressed against Pelagius.

Referring to that charge, Pelagius says, in his letter to pope Innocent, which is probably the foundation of Mr. Griggs' pretended quotation: "Se ab hominibus infamari quod negat parvulis baptismi sacramentum, et absolute redemptione Christi antiquitus regna coelorum promittat." In this he complains that men had slanderously reported him as denying the sacrament of baptism to little ones, and as promising to some, that is to infants, the kingdom of heaven without the redemption of Christ.

In reply he says: "Nunquam se vel impium aliquem hereticum audisse, qui hoc, quod propositum de parvulis, diceret." Here Pelagius declares, not, as Mr. Griggs says, that "he never heard of any one, even the most impious heretic, who asserted that infants are not to be baptized," but that "he had never heard any heretic who was so impious as to assert that which he had before stated concerning little ones."

Now that the pronoun *hoc*, representing the thing which Pelagius, so far from having spoken, had never heard from the most impious heretic, refers to the promise of the kingdom of heaven without the redemption of Christ, and not to the denial of infant baptism, is evident both from the constructive laws of language, and from the well-established fact that infant baptism was opposed in the time of Pelagius.

Thus it appears that Origen, Augustine, and Pelagius, are all made to speak from the pages of this book, language which they never uttered. It is true, these half-perfect quotations were not manufactured by Mr. Griggs; for they are found in the works of his predecessors. But nevertheless, the language of ancient authors, when wielded in the warfare of truth and error, is sacred; and he who constitutes himself the interpreter of all antiquity is bound to deal faithfully with thoughts and the words of witnesses long since discharged.

ISOCRATES.

MINISTERS TEACHERS. Ministers are teachers. They teach by precept and by their own example. When therefore they are in any way unholly, they teach sin.—Morning Star.

For the Christian Secretary.

In what does the real power and prosperity of a Church consist?

1. One vital element of the power and prosperity of a church is the personal regeneration by the Holy Ghost of each member composing the body; therefore none should be admitted to its communion but such as give satisfactory evidence of being born again. "Except a man be born again, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." The introduction into a church of unregenerate persons, who have not implanted within them, by the Holy Ghost, the gracious principle of eternal life, to control them in their career of christian discipleship, is no possible advantage to the real prosperity of a church, because such persons can have no vital union or communion with the Almighty Spirit, nor any real likeness to God, and consequently can add nothing to the true glory or permanent prosperity of the church of God. They are therefore mere church lumber, in the most innocent view of the subject; and although matters may pass on, for a long time, so as on the whole to please them, and although they may appear to be very estimable persons as neighbors and acquaintances, yet the time will come, in the history of every church, when every member shall somehow or other, be brought to the test, concerning the character of his religious principles and feelings, when they will develop themselves whether they are of God or of the world, and if they are found to possess a character less than the spirit of Christ, it will often be found a most difficult and undesirable labor to put such worldly professors back to their home in the world.

The gospel of Christ, in all its vital principles and influences, is a real test of human character. "For the word of God is quick and powerful, sharper than any two edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discernor of the thoughts and intents of the heart." Hence the plain preaching of the gospel in its crucifixion to the world, its holy requirements of prayer, scripture reading, and self-denial, of every member under the faithful dispensation of the truth. Hence, if members of a church are really unregenerate, and yet pressed by the undesirable restraints of Bible requirement in this solemn relation, they will be in heart opposed to the real spirituality of the gospel, and also to its faithful exhibition, and become exceedingly restless. "For the carnal heart is enmity against God, and is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be."

And the true character of the unregenerate heart is not changed by making a visible profession of discipleship: hence, too, as men are always disposed when guilty, to call things by their wrong names, like Judas, who wished to have his covetousness called fragility, economy and charity for the poor, so the inconsistent church member is never disposed to call his conduct an opposition to the spirituality of the truth, or the requirements of a consistent gospel practice; yet if they are inconsistent, unregenerate, covetous, worldly, prayerless, lovers of their own selves more than lovers of God, they must assign some reason for this, or else come out in their true character, (which they are of course unwilling to do.) Hence arise alienations, strifes and divisions, and foundations of prejudice and impiety are laid, for parties and controversies with the faithful minister, or the most spiritual and stable members of the church, which unless prevented by a wholesome and prompt discipline, will mar the beauty and overthrow the moral power of the church of God. In such a state of things among unregenerate members, an irreconcilable spirit will be called a manly and righteous indignation against something they see, or think they see, in the minister, or some other member of the church. A neglect of the means of grace, and other responsibilities of church membership, will be called a great desire for the peace of the church, forsooth, because they do not wish to quarrel. This desire for peace will perhaps manifest itself by the modest presumption of determining every thing concerning the condition and character of the church, either in whole, or in part; also the character and influence of the pastor's labors in, or out of the pulpit. Under such circumstances, faults are found with the prayers, exhortations and influence of some of the most active members, or remarks like the following:—"I wish our minister would preach the gospel, and let temperance alone; I wish our minister would preach the gospel, and let abolitionism alone; I wish he would preach the gospel, and let Sabbath-breaking, the love of fashion, the ball-room, and other kindred worldly pleasures alone, and let us regulate our own innocent amusements; I wish our minister would preach the gospel, and let Universalism, Millerism, Mormonism, and Infant Baptism alone, together with the doctrine of personal and eternal election; or I think our minister has been very useful in his way here, but would be more useful somewhere else, and this too, when the faithful pastor may have be-

come well acquainted both with the church and community, and is perhaps the only man who could be most useful in the given field. The power and prosperity of the church consists in the godliness of those composing its membership, and the introduction of unregenerate persons, whether rich or poor, learned or rude, of much or little influence, is no possible benefit, but an injury to the body of Christ.

You may ask, What have been some of the prominent means which have led to the greatest increase of unregenerate church members into evangelic churches? I answer, 1st, Infant Baptism, without going into particulars here, allow me to express my matured conviction, viz: that Infant Baptism has been the means of introducing more unregenerate persons into the church of God than all other instrumentalities combined. It has been a means of creating more false hopes, of deluding more poor souls relative to the origin and characteristics of vital piety, than anything else that ever claimed the passport of the evangelic church; and it is one of the most withering curses with which christendom has ever been visited. Some one may say, if this be so, then your Baptist churches will be the purest communion of the saints on earth. Without going into the merits of this thought, suffice it to say, that Infant Baptism is very tame theology, and practiced generally in America at the present, for we can form but little idea of what Infant Baptism is and does, in many countries, from what we see of its influence in New England, where there is so much of the true light shining on believers' immersion.

2. The feverish tendencies of the past few years to irregular and ill managed excitements. A feverish state is always unhealthy, but the most powerful action of life's fountain within its proper limits, never. I do not mean to throw the least suspicion around the periodical and powerful revival of God's work in a glorious manner. "For as the rain cometh down and the snow from heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower and bread to the eater, so shall my word which goeth forth out of my mouth, it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it." Neither would I throw the least obstacle in the way of protracted meetings, and the most strenuous exertions (consistent with truth) to arouse christians and awaken sinners, but I consider it wrong to make the sacred desk a stage for every species of mimicry and vulgarity; and the sanctuary a theatre for every unrestrained ebullition of animal emotion, and all this to produce an effect immediate, and an excitement irregular and disorderly that no Pastor could control, and of such a kind too, that time has soon proved that religious principle has but little to do with it. The great difficulty under such circumstances, has been that the desire to increase in numbers, has induced great laxity in the application of tests of piety to the candidates for baptism; we have overlooked glaring imperfections, and with an extensive charity, we have in spite of our convictions, encouraged some, whom we ought not, to become members of our churches. But some Apostolic Baptist is ready to ask, what shall we do? Shall we adopt the waiting probationary plan of the Methodists? By no means, we say wait only, but wait until you obtain satisfactory evidence "of a work of grace, whether it be the same hour of the night, one day, one week or six months. It is true we cannot discern spirits, but we do say, prove the spirits whether they are of God or of the Devil. "For if any man have not the spirit of Christ he is none of his." W. R.

For the Christian Secretary.

"Go work in my Vineyard." From a Correspondence in Iowa, Dec. 18th, 1845.

Brother B., as you are aware, is now with us. We feel that a kind providence directed him hither. Never were we, in this place, or throughout the Territory, more in need of men of his qualifications for the ministry than at this time. Would that our friends at the East and the West would think of the vast difference between the influence exerted in the Redeemer's kingdom by well qualified ministers, and that of those who are not thus qualified.—Are there not some ministers at the East, known by others to possess the requisite qualifications, who can be induced to come into this region? The amount of good they could do here at this time, for the present and future prosperity of Zion, eternity alone can reveal. Other denominations are making strong, and some of them, praiseworthy efforts; Romanism and other false religions are taking hold upon the people with a strong grasp; vice and immorality abound every where; and our character as a people is fast forming. Of what infinite importance is it that we should endeavor to diffuse the glorious principles which we profess to believe and love, and endeavor to exert a proper Christian influ-

ence over the immense mass of mind congregated and increasing so rapidly in this valley. Burlington and DuBuque and Galena and several other populous villages, ought to be immediately supplied with the best men that can be obtained.

REMARKS.

Many persons appear to think that ministers are so much needed at the West, that quite ordinary and indeed very inefficient ones, such as find it difficult to secure situations at the East, will be very acceptable there. A greater mistake cannot easily be made. Doubtless there are obscure neighborhoods there, as elsewhere, partially settled by honest, simple-hearted people, who, during their incipient arrangements for a livelihood, consider it a blessing to enjoy the privilege of public worship under very humble circumstances; but the minds which are influenced by such motives, as induced them to plunge into the depths of political and pecuniary enterprise prevalent in that region, and which are actively employed in giving tone to public sentiment and feeling, minds which are strong and active in the investigation of principles and their bearing upon the various interests of society, are not to be moved by the weak and imperfect efforts of men who cannot gain influence elsewhere. As at the East so at the West, those ministers of any denomination who have succeeded in gaining the influence which is essential to the proper moulding of the public character are strong men; and such only can succeed in the same way any where.

Some say there are ministers enough at the West to supply the existing wants of the people. There may be a great many men there called ministers; but of the number, no small proportion would do the churches and the people a favor by entirely abandoning the field or their calling; they are incompetent.

Many others in this region associate with a resident at the West, the idea of hardships, suffering and poverty—an itinerancy among log cabins, frequent long journeys in wild forests, and over boundless prairies. But these features of Western life are correct only to a limited extent. Itinerant duties are indispensable in every State of the Union, and those who perform them suffer more or less from exposure, fatigue and poverty. There are but few wealthy preachers of the gospel—none become so by their profession. Faithful ministers of Christ at the West, having the confidence of the people, though necessarily employed in hard service, need not long suffer from the lack of any comfort. But ministers are needed at the West for other service besides itinerating. Multitudes of churches need pastors, and among them are many in villages and cities, requiring the same sort of labor from their pastors, and which is expected at the East, and are ready to contribute as liberally for their support as their circumstances will allow. Some are as comfortably provided for as any in the land. When necessity requires aid, the Home Mission Society are ready to supply it.

There, then, is a wide field presenting the whole diversity of labor for its profitable cultivation that is requisite here; the same reward of merit which is enjoyed here, and on account of the unparalleled richness and extent of the Territory; the astonishing rapidity of its settlement; and the grasping eagerness with which infidelity, popery, and all manner of false religions are endeavoring to appropriate it to themselves, as important a theatre of useful action as can now be found any where else on earth. Must that field be suffered to lie in its spontaneous growth of thorns and thistles? or, be yielded up to the hands which sow nought but tares? Or, shall we be permitted to rejoice, in the acceptance of its frequent, earnest investigations, by some able, experienced, godly men—men having the confidence of the churches here—men who can gain it and be useful there.

B. M. HILL.

Cor. Sec. A. B. H. M. Soc.

Times Past and Times Present.

There is a mournful contrast between times past, when almost the whole land felt the power and presence of the Lord in his churches, and these days of sad declension and spiritual apathy among Christians. The power and presence of the Spirit of God can alone remedy this dreadful evil, and restore the churches to that life and prosperity which is so greatly desirable. Will not Christians, as they read the following from the pen of Dr. Griffin, pray earnestly and unceasingly for a return of the life-giving Spirit?

Time has been, when the voice of Jesus of Nazareth was heard in these streets—when his majesty sat enthroned in our assemblies—when the interests of the soul were more regarded than paltry self—when Christians lived—when sinners trembled—when the new born delighted to hush the name of Jesus. As we cast our eyes over this assembly we can descry those who will not soon forget the scene. Yes, we have seen the day when some of you were trembling in near view of the eternal judgment

—when you verily thought there was but a step between you and death. We have seen the blessed hour when heavenly light broke in upon your despair—when your eyes opened upon eternal day—when your transported souls dropped the calculation of endless sorrows and hugged the hope of immortal joy. I live, I live, you cried, as your grave-clothes dropped at your feet. We have seen a parent's eye glisten with a trembling tear as his child looked up to thank his Deliverer. We have seen the solemn hour when, with palpitations before unknown, you stood in companies before the Lord to enter into covenant with him. We have seen the dear youth delighting to speak to each other of a Saviour's love, when tenderness melted in every eye, and their societies were full of the presence of Jesus and of love. Let me cleave to the fond remembrance. Tear me not from a scene to which my soul clings as to life itself. But ah! it is gone, and what do these distressed eyes now behold? One general waste of stupidity and death. No child is revived; no parent's heart leaps for joy; none are conscious of their guilt and danger; none experience the joys of their espousals. Their divine Deliverer, whose love, in that hour, they thought they never could forget, is forgotten and neglected. The world has rivaled him. The world has carried away the Christian, the convert and the sinner. The world, the world, the world: this is the object which engrosses every care; this is the supreme deity that is adored. "Buy and sell and get gain; out with the thoughts of death: away with judgment and heaven: name not a Saviour's love: my farms and my merchandise I will have, though the earth tremble under my feet and heaven weeps blood upon my head." And is it thus? Yes, and it is an evil beyond our power to cure. We have done and said all we can do, and it alters not the case.—Where then is the Lord God of Elijah? Where is the Lord God of our former Sabbaths and sacraments? Where, O where is he? Look down from heaven, and behold from the habitation of thy holiness and of thy glory: where is thy zeal and thy strength, the sounding of thy bowels and of thy mercies!—Are they restrained? I do know that it depends solely on the sovereign pleasure of God whether there shall ever be another revival of religion in this place, or whether they who are dead shall remain dead to eternity. One look from him and our sleeping friends shall revive; one frown from him and every unregenerate soul in this congregation shall die in his sins.

The Stream of Life.

From a letter of Dr. Arnold, addressed to his wife from Elba.

We are now near Pirna, that is, near the end of the Saxon Switzerland; the cliffs which here line the river on both sides—a wall of cliff rising out of wood, and crowned with wood—will in a very short time sink down into plains, or at the best into gentle slopes, and the Elba will wind through one unvaried flat from this point till it reaches the sea. There is to me something almost affecting in the striking analogy of rivers to the course of human life, and my fondness for them makes me notice it more in them than in any other objects in which it may exist equally. The Elba rises in plains; it flows through plains for some way; then for many miles it runs through the beautiful scenery which we have been visiting, and then it is plain again for all the rest of its course. Even yet, dearest, and we have reached our middle course in the ordinary run of life; how much more favored have we been than this river; for hitherto we have gone on through nothing but a fair country, yet so far like the Elbe, that the middle has been the loveliest. And what if our course is henceforth to run through plains as dreary as those of the Elbe, for we are now widely separated, and I may never be allowed to return to you, and know not what may happen, or may even now have happened to you. Then the river may be our comfort, for we are passing on as it passes, and we are going to the bosom of that Being who sent us forth, even as the rivers return to the sea, the general fountain of all waters. Thus much is natural religion, not surely to be despised or neglected, though we have more given us than any thing which the analogy of nature can parallel.—For He who trod the sea, and whose path is in the deep waters, has visited us with so many manifestations of his grace, and is our God by such other high titles, greater than that of creation, that to him who puts out the arm of faith, and brings the mercies that are round him home to his own particular use, how full of overflowing comfort must the world be, even when its plains are the dreariest and loveliest!—Well may every one of Christ's disciples repeat to him the prayer made by his first twelve, "Lord, increase our faith!"—well may he wonder—as the Scripture applies such a term to God—that our faith is so little. Be it strengthened in us, dearest, and in our children, that we may be all, one, now and evermore, in Christ Jesus.

Poetry.

For the Christian Secretary.

Pure Religion.

The good man smiles to wipe the sufferer's eye,
And bows to listen to the orphan's prayer;
Oft from his bounty he can freely spare
A part, the anguish'd widow needs supply,
Nor passes the lone wretched stranger by.
What heaven has given, he delights to share,
Confiding in his heavenly Father's care,
With eye of faith serenely lifted high,
He keeps his garments clean, and pure from sin,
And doing good to all, peace in his breast,
Nor lets the darker passions brood within;
Severs the galling chains of the oppress'd;
Such is Religion undefiled and pure,
And such before Jehovah will endure.
Worcester, Ms., Jan. 1846. JUSTITIA.

The Midnight Call.

BY MRS. M. L. GARDNER.

There came a voice! "Who dare," said I,
"Disturb me in the midnight hour?"
"Mortal, I'm Time—attend my cry,
And learn how vast, how great my power.

"Dost thou not know 'tis time to die?"
"Tis time to stand before thy God?"
Behold how swift the moments fly,
And mark the winding paths I've trod.

"Awake! and listen; dream no more;
Shake off thy sloth—one year has fled
Since last I entered at thy door,
And stood beside thy curtained bed.

"One warning more I would thee give,
Ere I am onward in my flight—
Forsake the ways of sin, and live,
And revel in the Gospel light.

"East, west, and north and south, have seen,
Have felt the impress of my hand;
No spot on earth, but where I've been,
I've drank the sea, and shrunk the land;

"I've seen the loftiest temples fall
That e'er were reared by mortal skill—
All, all obedient to my call,
Have crumbled, and are crumbling still.

"Mortal, thou too must pass away,
Thy name and place be known no more;
Prepare thy bark without delay,
To bear thee to an unknown shore.

"The clock strikes twelve! another year
Has fled forever—learn to die—
Remember time—each moment's dear,
Short is thy passage to the sky."

"Stop, stop," I cried, "one moment, Time—
One little instant, stop, I pray!"
"I'm done," he cried, in words sublime,
And darted on his noiseless way!

Just then, the fire that lay concealed
Beneath the embers, brightly burned;
The blaze, the Word of God revealed,
And to its sacred page I turned.

Though many years have passed and gone,
That midnight call is fresh to me;
I hear it when I'm all alone,
And shall through all eternity.

Religious and Moral.

Temptation of John Calvin.

The following anecdote of Calvin, while it does much honor to his moral and religious character, is a curious historical fact, which deserves to be generally known. It is related at Geneva, by Diodati, one of Calvin's successors, to the first Lord Orreary, who flourished under the reign of Charles I. The extract is taken from "The State Letters and Memoirs of the Right Honorable Roger Boyle."

"Eckius being sent by the Pope, legate into France, upon his return resolved to take Geneva in his way, on purpose to see Calvin; and if occasion were, to attempt reducing him to the Roman Church. Therefore, when Eckius was come within a league of Geneva, he left his retinue there, and went, accompanied with one man to the city in the forenoon. Putting up his horse at an inn, he inquired where Calvin lived, whose house being showed him, he knocked at the door, and Calvin himself came to open to him. Eckius inquiring for Mr. Calvin, he was told he was the person. Eckius acquainted him that he was a stranger; and having heard much of his fame, was come to wait upon him. Calvin invited him to come in, and he entered the house with him; where, discoursing of many things concerning religion, Eckius perceived Calvin to be an ingenious, learned man, and desired to know if he had not a garden to walk in. To which Calvin, replying that he had, they both went into it; and there Eckius began to inquire of him why he left the Roman Church, and offered him some arguments to persuade him to return; but Calvin could by no means be inclined to think of it. At last Eckius told him that he would put his life in his hands; and then said he was Eckius the Pope's legate. At the discovery, Calvin was not a little surprised, and begged his pardon, that he had not treated him with that respect which was due to his quality. Eckius returned the compliment, and told him if he would come back to the Roman church, he would certainly procure for him a Cardinal's cap. But Calvin was not to be moved by such an offer. Eckius then asked him what revenue he had? He told the Cardinal he had that house and garden, and fifty livers per annum, besides an annual present of some wine and corn; on which he lived very contentedly. Eckius told him, that a man of his parts deserved a greater revenue;—and then renewed his invitation to come over to the Roman church, promising a better stipend if he would. But Calvin giving him thanks, assured him he was well satisfied with his condition. About this time dinner was ready, when he entertained his company as well as he could, excused the defects of it, and paid him great respect. Eckius after dinner desired to know, if he might not be admitted to see the church, which anciently was the cathedral of that city. Calvin very readily answered that

he might; accordingly he sent to the officers to be ready with the keys, and desired some of the syndics to be there present, not acquainting them who the stranger was. As soon, therefore, as it was convenient, they both went towards the church, and as Eckius was coming out of Calvin's house, he drew out a purse, with about one hundred pistoles, and presented it to Calvin. But Calvin desired to be excused; Eckius told him he gave it him to buy books, as well as to express his respect for him. Calvin, with much regret took the purse, and they proceeded to the church, where the syndics and officers waited upon them; at the sight of whom Eckius thought he had been betrayed, and whispered his thoughts in Calvin's ear; but Calvin assured him to the contrary. Thereupon they went into the church; and Eckius having seen all, told Calvin he did not expect to find things in so decent an order, having been told to the contrary. After having taken a full view of everything, Eckius was returning out of the church, but Calvin stopped him a little, and calling the syndics and officers together, took the purse of gold which Eckius had given to him, telling them that he had received that gold from his worthy stranger, and that now he gave it to the poor and so put it all into the poor box that was kept there. The syndics thanked the stranger, and Eckius admired the charity and modesty of Calvin. When they came out of the church, Calvin invited Eckius again to his house, but he replied that he must depart; so thanking him for all his civilities, offered to take his leave. But Calvin waited upon him to the inn, and walked with him a mile out of the territories of Geneva, where with great compliments, they took a farewell of each other."

Eckius was a very learned divine, Professor in the University of Ingolstadt, memorable for his opposition to Luther, Melancthon, and other Reformers in Germany. He died in 1534, aged 57.

Peace Principles.

A few years ago, I met an elderly man in the Hartford stage, whose conversation led me to reflect on the baseness and iniquity often concealed behind the apparent glory of war. The thumb of his right hand hung down as if suspended by a piece of thread, and some of the passengers inquired the cause. "A Malay woman cut the muscle with her sabre," was the reply. "A Malay woman!" they exclaimed. "How came you fighting with a woman?" "I did not know she was a woman, for they all dress alike there," said he. "I was on board the U. S. ship Potomac when it was sent out to chastise the Malays for murdering the crew of a Salem vessel. We attacked one of their forts, and killed some two hundred or more. Many of them were women; and I can tell you the Malay women are as good fighters as the men."

After answering several questions concerning the conflict, he was silent for a moment, and then added, with a sigh, "Ah, that was a bad business. I do not like to remember it; I wish I never had had anything to do with it. I have been a seaman from my youth, and I know the Malays well. They are a brave and honest people. Deal fairly with them and they will treat you well, and may be trusted with untold gold. The Americans were to blame in that business. The truth is, christian nations are generally to blame in the outset, in all their difficulties with less civilized people. A Salem ship went to Malacca to trade for pepper. They agreed to give the natives a stated compensation when a certain number of measures of pepper were delivered. Men, women, and children were busy picking pepper, and bringing it on board. The captain proposed that the sailors should go ashore and help them; and the natives consented with the most confiding good nature. The sailors were instructed to pick till evening and then leave the baskets full of peppers among the bushes, with the understanding that they were to be brought on board by the natives in the morning. They did so, without exciting any suspicion of treachery. But in the night the baskets were all conveyed on board, and the vessel sailed away, leaving the Malays unpaid for her valuable cargo. This, of course, excited great indignation, and they made loud complaints to the commander of the next American vessel that arrived on their coast. In answer to a demand of redress from the Government, they were assured that the case should be represented, and the wrong repaired. But 'yankee cuteness' in cheating a few savages, was not sufficiently uncommon to make any great stir, and the affair was soon forgotten. Some time after another captain of a Salem ship played a similar trick, and carried off a still larger quantity of stolen pepper. The Malays, exasperated beyond measure, resorted to Lynchlaw, and murdered an American crew that landed there about the same time. The U. S. ship Potomac was sent out to punish them for this outrage; and, as I told you, we killed some two hundred men and women. I sometimes think that our retaliation was more not rational or more like christians, than theirs."

"Will you please," said I, "to tell me what sort of revenge would be like christians?"

He hesitated, and said it was a hard question to answer. "I never felt pleasantly about that affair," continued he; "I would not have killed her if I had known she was a woman."

I asked why he felt more regret about killing a woman than a man.

"I hardly know why myself," answered he. "I don't suppose I should, if it were a common thing for women to fight. But we are accustomed to think of them as not

defending themselves; and there is something in every human heart that makes a man unwilling to fight those who do not fight in return. It seems mean and dastardly, and a man cannot work himself up to it."

"Then if one nation would not fight, another could not," said I.

"What if a nation, instead of an individual, should make such an appeal to the manly feeling, which you say is inherent in the heart?"

"I believe other nations would be ashamed to attack her," he replied. "It would take away all the glory and excitement of war, and the hardest soldier would shrink from it as from cold-blooded murder."

"Such a peace establishment would be at once cheap and beautiful," rejoined I; and so we parted.—Mrs. Child.

The Gate of Death.

A thousand iron gates open to let dying men out of life. When the door opens, each one must pass over that mysterious threshold, and descend to the dark valley. Sometimes the gate opens very suddenly before the face of an individual, and without a moment's warning he is pushed through the gate by an invisible hand, against which he can make no resistance. He must go, and go alone, unless the presence of God be with him, to enlighten his path through that lone valley. To the prayerless man, the worlding, the gay, the thoughtless, and all who forget God, the sudden opening of death's gate occasions a fearful surprise. The Christian views it in a different light; and though it is dark, he will fear no evil, if God be with him. So David felt. He thought the valley of death dark and filled with shadows. Bunyan's Pilgrim found in it a stream of water which he was obliged to ford, and Christiansa passed over Jordan before she came to the celestial city. Elijah went through it in a chariot of fire, and Enoch, of light. Some have gone down into loathsome dungeons to seek its portal, others mounted on scaffolds to find the gate, and more have laid themselves down quietly upon their beds until the angel came and gently led them on their way.

And little does it matter in what way we walk therein, or how soon we enter upon the path, so that we finish the journey in safety. The road is not a long one at the farthest, and though it be never so dark, or shadowy, or lonely, or cold, if the Saviour of sinners be there, I will fear no evil. "Thy rod and thy staff they comfort me."

Live, live for God,
And toil a world to save;
Live, live for God,
Nor heed the coming grave;
The time, the place, the way,
He knows them all;
Do well thy work to-day;
And wait his call.

Reading Hymns.

That part of the services of the sanctuary, which consists of the reading of the psalms and hymns, is most apt to be passed with a careless performance; and yet the best effect of the whole service, depends very much upon it. We know some of our best preachers, who are very deficient in this particular; and who seem to regard it as of no consequence, whether their reading communicates the sentiment of the hymn or not. And on the other hand we have known those, who would produce as much impression by the reading of the hymns, as many would produce by a good sermon.

One important object gained by a good reading of them, is the preparation of the singers to catch and give a musical conveyance to the sense of the hymn. A good reader preceding the singing, has conveyed to the mind of the singers, a true and vivid apprehension of the meaning of the sacred poet; and thus prepared the way for a better expression of the sense in the singing; and for the better effect of the singing on the congregation. So that the whole impression of the services of the sanctuary may be very essentially marred by a careless, lifeless, or monotonous performance of this reading. A good reader conveys tenfold the sense and power of divine thought, of what is conveyed by a bad reading. And the same law holds in the reading of hymns.

The fault to which we allude is very general, and its correction is a matter of public interest.—Puritan.

Fear the Sexton.

Not many years ago a clergyman, on a journey, stopped to spend a Sabbath in a small village, where there was no church edifice, but where he soon found that the Universalists had been preaching in the school house for some time past. Two or three preachers of that persuasion were still in the village, some public meeting connected with their cause, having called them and kept them there.

The travelling clergyman succeeded in obtaining the use of the house for a part of the day, and gave out word that he would preach. The people came together, not knowing what doctrine they should hear, but most of them being inclined to Universalism.

He took his text, Luke xii. 4, 5:

"And I say unto you, my friends, Be not afraid of them that kill the body and after that have no more that they can do: But I forewarn you whom you shall fear; Fear him which after he hath killed, hath power to cast into hell; yea I say unto you, Fear him."

He then went on to say that there were two opinions as to the meaning of the word "hell" in this passage. One opinion is that it means a place of torment into which the wicked will be cast after the death of the body. But the other opinion is, that

the word means the grave. On this latter opinion it is evident, he said, whom we are warned in these words to fear. "Do not be afraid of them that kill the body and have no more that they can do. But I will forewarn you whom ye shall fear: fear him, which after he hath killed, hath power to cast into the grave, yea, I say unto you, fear him!" Fear not the assassin who comes armed with a deadly weapon, he can only kill the body; but O my friends, I warn you whom to fear; fear him who has power to cast your murdered body into the grave: yea, I say unto you fear the Sexton!

He then proceeded with a very simple but pointed discourse in defence of the gospel, and in opposition to the doctrines of the false teachers that were misleading the people, and showed them that the Bible must be full of just such nonsense as he had made of this passage, if there were any truth in Universalism.

A plain man, one of his hearers, remarked on coming out, that this unknown preacher by a single stroke had demolished all that the Universalists had done in all their previous labors in their vicinity.

The following notice written by one of our most respectable Congregational Clergymen, we copy from the Religious Herald.

Vital Christianity.

Essays and Discourses on the Religions of Man and the Religion of God: by Alexander Vinet, D. D. Translated, from the French by Rev. Robert Turnbull. Boston: Gould, Kendall & Lincoln, 1845.

Messrs. Robins & Smith have put this valuable and interesting book into our hands, and we assure our readers that though we rarely buy a new book, and especially a translation, yet if we did not already own it we should certainly purchase this work of Vinet. The book is appropriately entitled "Vital Christianity." The Essays and Discourses which it contains were all written with reference to one point. It is the joint aim of all to represent Christianity as an inner life, a vital experience of the soul; and neither a mere system of religious dogmas, nor a record a classification of moral instincts. Christianity always displaces the False with the True. It opposes and vanquishes every error by bringing forth and setting in contrast with it, the opposite truth. In the days of Christ, religion had degenerated into a precise and heartless formality. The truth with which the Saviour undertook to correct this error was uttered in the ears of the woman of Samaria. "God is a Spirit, and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth." From that time to this, Christianity has been assailed by a succession of different errors; and many of its sublime and important truths have been brought out and distinctly stated for the first time in some conflict with opposing error. This is the service which indelicately unwittingly renders, from age to age, to the cause of Christianity. One of the most common and dangerous religious errors now prevalent in France and Germany, is that philosophical dogma, which practically regards all religion as a mere system of moral psychology;—and which contents itself with the observation and arrangement of moral phenomena as they occur in the hearts of men and in society, and which deduces from these phenomena a science or a philosophy of religion, as its ultimate aim. This principle employs thousands of minds in Europe and is beginning to employ many minds in this country,—in the mere philosophical study of Christianity as nothing more than a moral science.

To meet this error and show that Christianity is a life, to be received and cherished in the soul of man—a vital power, existing as a conscious element in the experience of the Christian—a power and a life—to be felt and enjoyed and not a mere cabinet of moral specimens to be inspected and classified;—to show this, is the object of the work on "Vital Christianity." And if a clear head, a vigorous and bold intellect, a chaste and yet commanding and often eloquent diction, and all these superintended and infused with genuine piety can recommend a book, all these elements enter largely into the composition of the work on Vital Christianity. We would especially recommend this book to all who have become too philosophic to be any longer christian, who are so much engaged in the study of religion as a part of the empire of Psychology, that they have no time to welcome religion to their hearts and cherish it as a vital element in human experience. W. C.

A Thrilling Scene.

Our late foreign journals record an incident which is one of the most thrilling we ever read of. On a late occasion, the Emperor of Russia was reviewing his fleet, when two sailors particularly excited his attention, both by the precision which they performed several difficult manœuvres, and by the agility and daring which they displayed. The Emperor was so much pleased that he immediately promoted one to be a captain; the other he appointed lieutenant on the spot. The men, however, were Jews, and there is an unkind forbidding Jews to wear an epaulette. The Admiral of the fleet, who stood by the Emperor, knowing that they were Jews, stated the difficulty to his imperial Majesty. "Pshaw!" cried the Emperor, "that does not signify in the least—they shall immediately embrace the Greek religion, of course." When this determination was communicated to the young men, sorrow and despair seized upon them at the thought of receiving honor and promotion on such inexorable terms.—Knowing that remonstrance or refusal

would be in vain, they requested of the Emperor permission to exhibit still more of their manœuvres, as he had not seen all they could do. This being granted, they ascended the topmast, embraced, and locked in each other's arms, threw themselves into the sea and disappeared forever.—Post.

For the Christian Secretary.

The following lines are dedicated to Mr. and Mrs. W. R. Loomis, with a deep and earnest sympathy with them, in the bereavements which they have experienced in the death of their lovely daughter, Harriet and Eliza, the first of whom died Sept. 30th, 1845, aged 16 years, and the latter, on the 24th of Oct. following, aged 14 years.

"But thou art sent
For the sad earth's young and fair,
For the graceful heads that have not bent
To the wintry hand of care."

Why gathers here this mournful throng?
And why these signs of woe?
Alas! a lov'd and beautiful one
Is by death's hand laid low.

They come with silent tread around
The lovely sleeper's bier,
While eyes unused to weep, now shed
The tributary tear.

But the deep tones of sorrow's wail
Disturb not her repose;
Her gentle heart has ceased to throb
With grief for other's woes.

Slowly and sadly to the grave,
They bear her youthful form
To wait in long and dreamless rest
The resurrection morn.

'Tis over now! and prayers are raised
To Him who deat the blow,
That he the mourner's heart would heal,
On them his grace bestow.

But soon is borne on autumn winds,
That sad spirit's flight from earth
In mournful tones to tell.

Yes! she, who stood a mourner fair
Amid that weeping train,
Has cast her sable robe aside,
And left this world of pain.

And now that home seems desolate,
And lonely is the hearth,
Where late was heard the joyous song
To which glad hearts gave birth.

There stricken parents mourn the loved
That from their side are gone—
For the bright smiles in vain they look,
That on their path once shone.

Father! oh soothe their suffering hearts,
And in their bitter cup
May faith be found, that it may bear
Their fainting spirits up.

The Rose and the Clay.

One of the most eminent authors and philosophers has told the following little fable, in order to illustrate the great advantages which are to be derived from keeping company with the wise and virtuous.

"As I entered the bath one day, a friend presented me with a piece of perfumed clay. I was so pleased with the rare odor that I exclaimed, 'In what favored region of the earth wast thou found? I am enraptured with thy heavenly fragrance!'—It modestly replied, 'I am nothing but common clay; but I had the good fortune to lie for many years at the foot of a rose-bush, and the sweet influence of so close an intimacy has produced this effect upon me which you admire; or else, in truth, I should have been nothing but a lump of worthless clay as is my nature.' And what art thou, O man! if thou dost not partake of the secret influence of a purer Being? Worthless clay! Ay, and worse than worthless—a mass of poison and corruption. Let the Christian learn humility and gratitude from this lesson of the Mahometan.—Persian Fables.

Sublime Passages.

An obscure Scotch peasant, calling on business at a gentleman's house in Edinburgh, saw a bust of Shakespeare, and these lines from the Tempest inspired beneath it:

"The cloud-capt towers, the gorgeous palaces,
The solemn temples, the great globe itself,
Yea, all which it inhabits shall dissolve,
And, like the baseless fabric of a vision,
Leave not a wreck behind."

The gentleman, seeing the peasant's eyes attracted by these lines, asked him if he had ever seen any thing equal to them.—His reply was just and striking:

"Yes, I have. The following passage from the book of Revelation is more sublime—"

"And I saw a great white throne and Him that sat upon it, from whose face the earth and the heavens fled away, and there was no place for them."

Exercise.

Throughout all nature, want of motion indicates weakness, corruption, inanimation, and death. Trenc'h, in his damp prison, leaped about like a lion in his fetters of seventy pounds weight, in order to preserve his health; and an illustrious physician observes:—I know not what is most necessary to the support of the human frame—food or motion. Were the exercise of the body attended to in a corresponding degree with that of the mind, men of great learning would be more healthy and vigorous—of more general talents—of ampler practical knowledge—more happy in their domestic lives—more enterprising, and more attached to their duties as men. In fine, it may with much propriety be said, that the highest refinement of the mind, without improvement of the body, can never present more than half a human being.

Be something.—One principle of the Moslem creed is, that every person shall have some trade. Thus should it be the world over. See that young man, no matter what are his circumstances or prospects, if he has no plan he will never accomplish much. If he relies upon his present possessions, or upon the anticipated favors of fortune, ten to one if his fine hopes are not blighted, and he find, too late, that the only path to true greatness is by application. The following maxim will apply to those in every condition in society, who are about entering upon the stage of active life: Choose, after mature deliberation and consultation with

judicious friends, that vocation which appears most suitable for you. Be not diverted from your purpose, let nothing prevent you from qualifying yourself thoroughly for it, then pursue it with unremitting diligence, and you will honor yourself, and be a blessing to the community.

A GOOD CONSCIENCE.—A good conscience shows the evil, guilt, and desert of sin; it condemns precisely as God condemns; it condemns at the bar of justice and acquits at the bar of mercy; it echoes the whole of divine truth; it receives it as the wax receives the impression of the seal; it possesses freedom from the guilt of sin, and peace with God through faith in Jesus Christ; it is at first purged and perpetually kept pure by the flowing of the stream of that fountain which was opened for sin and uncleanness; it is alive to self-examination, which is its element; it is armed by the power of the spirit of Christ to carry his truth into the inmost recesses of the soul; it evinces itself in gratitude to God for the blessings of the gospel. "Thanks be unto God for his unspeakable gift," was a song prompted by a good conscience; and it evinces itself in love to man.—Howells.

THE GREAT DESTROYER DETECTED.—Oh, how long have we been deceived! We long searched for the poison that was destroying our life. The drop said, it is not in me. I am but a drop and can do no harm. The little stream said, it is not me. Am not a little one, and can do no harm! And the demon of Intemperance, as he prowled around us, said, let my drops and rivulets alone, they can do no harm. Go stop, if you can, the mighty river. We believed her, but the river baffled our efforts. Its torrents rolled on, and for a time we contented ourselves with snatching here and there a youth from destruction. But we now see that the poison is in the drops and rivulets, and without these, that river which is still sweeping the young and the old into the ocean of despair, would cease forever.

DR. PAYSON, when racked with pain and near to death, exclaimed, "O, what a blessed thing it is to lose one's will! Since I have lost my will, I have found happiness. There can be no such thing as disappointment to me, for I have no DESIRES, but that God's will may be accomplished."

SPLENDID SERMONS. Sermons dressed up to please the nice, the gay, and the great, are often as splendid as a palace ball office, but they are just about as cold.—Morning Star.

EXCUSES.—Excuses made by preachers at the commencement of their discourses generally make a bad matter worse, and the people often see that it is so. Better omit them.—Id.

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A Religious Gift Book.

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